



HOUSE RESTORES MEDICAID ADULT DENTAL PROGRAM

This week, the House released its budget conforming bills, which are bills that amend statutory provisions to implement policy changes that affect the budget. The House initially recommended suspending the adult dental program for Medicaid recipients for two years, but changed its position and now recommends the continuation of the program. The Senate still recommends eliminating the adult dental program, effective October 1, 2008. Funding in the Senate proposal will continue for three months during fiscal year 2008-2009 out of the Lawton Chiles Endowment funds, which is non-recurring funding. There are still major differences between the House and Senate budgets. The House budget still contains the \$2.1 million Medicaid fee increase for children dental services. The FDA staff will continue to monitor the budget process closely.

HOUSE COMMITTEE DELAYS IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSED MEDICAID REFORM EXPANSION

At the request of Rep. Juan Zapata (R-Miami) the House Budget and Policy Committee voted to delay its proposed expansion of Medicaid reform from September 2009 to September 2010. The House is proposing that the third pilot site include Pasco, Pinellas, Hardee, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Monroe and Polk Counties. Rep. Loranne Ausley (D-Tallahassee) argued feverishly against any proposed expansion. The issue of whether or not to expand the Medicaid pilot sites will be the subject of further debate on the House floor.

The House is unlikely to remove the expansion provision from the conforming bill and the issue will be part of the budget conference process. The Senate's proposed budget does not contain any language to expand Medicaid Reform.

FDA MEMBER DENTISTS MAKE AN IMPACT AT DENTISTS' DAY ON THE HILL

On April 2, approximately 200 dentists and dental students traveled to the state's Capitol to meet with legislators for



Dentists' Day on the Hill. Despite the House and Senate being in Session most of the day, dentists and students were able to meet face-to-face with their legislators. The message given to legislators was a unified one: increase Medicaid dental reimbursement fees; fund the student loan repayment program; support CS/SB 2760 by Sen. Durrell Peaden (R-Crestview); oppose expanding dental Medicaid managed care and oppose scope of practice expansion and licensure by credentials.



(Dr. Terry Buckenheimer, Rep. Ed Hooper (R-Clearwater) and Dr. Nolan Allen at the Tuesday night reception)

The Tuesday night (April 1) legislative reception at Paradigm was well attended by dentists, students and legislators. The Representatives who attended the reception included Clay Ford (R-Pensacola); Michael Grant (R-Port Charlotte); Gayle Harrell (R-Port St. Lucie); Alan Hays (R-Umatilla); Doug Holder (R-Sarasota); Ed Hooper (R-Clearwater); Matt Hudson (R-Naples); Stan Jordan (R-Jacksonville); Rick Kriseman (D-St. Petersburg); Janet Long (D-St. Petersburg); Jimmy Patronis (R-Panama City); Garrett Richter (R-Naples); Darren Soto (D-Orlando) and William Snyder (R-Stuart). Sen. Lee Constantine (R-Orlando) also attended the reception.

Wednesday was an exciting day for Dentists' Day attendees. Several dentists were able to attend the Senate Health and Human Services Appropriations committee and watch CS/SB 2760 by Sen. Peaden pass out of the Committee. There was great attendance for the Dentists' Day breakfast briefing. The breakfast briefing was held at FSU's University Center Club. Attendees were welcomed by FDA President Dr. Nolan Allen. FDA lobbyists provided information on the FDA's current legislative issues and provided direction on what information to pass along to legislators.

Following the breakfast was a presentation by guest speaker Joel Blackwell. Mr. Blackwell provided

excellent tips on how to get what you want from legislators and emphasized the importance of grassroots advocacy.

The Dentists' Day luncheon was held in the Capitol's courtyard between the old and new Capitol buildings. Rep. Hays, the only FDA member dentist in the Legislature, welcomed members to the Capitol and encouraged everyone to meet with their legislators. The remainder of the day was set aside for visits with legislators. Many other meetings occurred during Dentists' Day including a meeting with AHCA Secretary Holly Benson and Florida's Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink.

This year was another great Dentists' Day on the Hill. FDA staff thanks all FDA members who took the time out of their busy practice to lobby on behalf of organized dentistry. Your presence at the Capitol makes a huge impact.

Mark your calendars for the 2009 Dentists' Day on the Hill scheduled for Tuesday, March 31 and Wednesday, April 1.

DENTISTS' DAY LEADERSHIP MEETINGS WITH BILL MCCOLLUM AND ALEX SINK

During Dentists' Day on the Hill, FDA leadership had the opportunity to meet with two of the four Cabinet members, Attorney General Bill McCollum and Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink. The Florida Cabinet is made up of four statewide elected officers who act as the "Executive Branch" of government. The Governor is the elected "chief executive" of Florida, but the three other members of the Cabinet (Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer and the Commissioner of Agriculture) are also elected statewide to serve as a collective decision and rule making body for the state.

After the Tuesday night reception, a dinner was held for members of the DENTPAC Capital Hill Club at the Governors Club. Attorney General Bill McCollum joined us for dinner and gave a speech about his responsibilities and his priorities. He took questions and offered his support to dentistry in any fashion possible. There were about 40 dentists present.

After the Wednesday luncheon, Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink met with FDA President Nolan Allen, FDA First Vice-President Chuck Hoffman, FDA Secretary Cesar Sabates, FDA Board of Trustees Alternate Betty Hughes, FLADPAC Chairman Doug Starkey, FSOMS President Michael Langan, FDA member Geri Ferris and FDA lobbyists. The group met in her cabinet office conference room and she discussed KidCare funding, Medicaid funding, the overall budget situation, as well as hurricane issues.

The FDA would like to thank both cabinet members for taking time out of their very busy schedules to meet with FDA members.

SENATE DENTAL BILL CONTINUES PROGRESSION IN FDA'S FAVOR

CS/SB 2760 by Sen. Durell Peaden (R-Crestview) received unanimous approval by the Senate Health and Human Services Appropriations Committee. Prior to its unanimous passage, the committee adopted an amendment containing technical changes agreed to by both the FDA and the Governor's office. Dr. Charles Hoffman, Dr. Dan Henry and FDA lobbyist Joe Anne Hart attended the committee hearing on behalf of the FDA. Dr. Howard Fisher attended the committee hearing on behalf of FSOMS.

CS/SB 2760 will be considered next by the full Senate. The House version of the bill, HB 1367 by Rep. Stan Jordan (R-Jacksonville), has not been heard in committee.

LEGISLATOR SPOTLIGHT



Rep. Franklin Sands (D-Plantation) was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2004. He represents House District 98 which covers part of Broward County. Rep. Sands is currently the House Democratic Whip. He is slated to become the House Democratic leader in the 2009 – 2010 legislative session. This is a prestigious leadership position. He serves as a member on the Health Innovation Committee; the Government Efficiency & Accountability Council; the Audit & Performance Committee; and the Select Committee on Condominium and Homeowners Association Governance.

Rep. Sands has been a great friend to organized dentistry. FLADPAC has contributed to his 2008 re-election campaign. His legislative contact dentists are Drs. Laurie Gordon-Brown, Alan Friedel and Melvyn Gober.

FLORIDA DENTAL ASSOCIATION GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

118 E. Jefferson St. • Tallahassee, FL 32301
850.224.1089 • 800.326.0051
Fax: 850.224.7058 • gao@floridadental.org

Dan Buker, FDA Executive Director
Rusty Payton, Director of Governmental Affairs
Joe Anne Hart, Lobbyist
Ron Watson, Lobbyist
Mary Edenfield, Governmental Affairs Assistant
Christine Mortham, Administrative Assistant

* Legislative Tracking Chart on Next Page

